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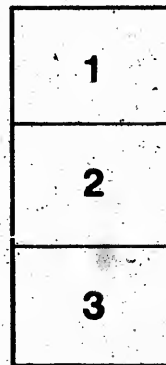
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DAVID AND JONATHAN.

SERMON.

TO THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD-FELLOWS
DELIVERED BY THE REV. E. WALLACE
WALTS, IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, STRAT-
FORD, ONT., ON SABBATH APRIL 13TH, 1879.

SUBJECT:—"FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, AND TRUTH."
AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE COVENANT OF DAVID
AND JONATHAN. "AND DAVID SAID, IS THERE
ANY YET THAT IS LEFT OF THE HOUSE OF
SAUL, THAT I MAY SHEW HIM KINDNESS
FOR JONATHAN'S SAKE."—2 SAMUEL IX.

We are to understand that David was in great jeopardy from Saul, the King of Israel. David himself was very sensible of the peril of his condition, so much so that he graphically described it to Jonathan in these words—"as my soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death!" David was anxious to know whether Saul was at all mollified towards him. So the two young men, Jonathan and David, made a little plan or covenant between them, by which they were to test the present condition of the King's mind. The dinner was provided as usual; Saul took his accustomed seat; but David was not present. But Saul had self control enough that day to say nothing about the absence of David. The next day things were established in their usual order, and still David was not present. Saul now lost self-control so far as to ask Jonathan why David, the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, was not in his place? Jonathan, according to a pre-arranged scheme, made reply. Saul then lost self-control, took up a javelin, and hurled it at Jonathan; and Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame!

Now came a very beautiful little incident. Jonathan went out of the house, and took his way into the field; by appointment, took a little lad with him, shot some arrows, called out to the boy words upon which himself and David had agreed, and David knew that anger was determined against him, "but the lad knew not the matter." There are unconscious workers in society. We do not know the full measure of all that we are doing. What are you doing, my little fellow? "I am picking up arrows for Jonathan the King's son." That is the end of his tale, so far as he knows it. Did he know that through him was telegraphed to a breaking heart that the king was determined against him! It is just so with us. We

see part of our work, the other side of it we know nothing about. What a mysterious life, then, is this! We are observed; we are set in order; we are made instruments in some cases. We are called, with the consent of our will, up to a certain point; and then, beyond that, we seem to be utterly helpless, not knowing the influences that are shed off the sides of our character, and the indirect results or the moral meanings of what we are doing. So there is an unintentional and unconscious life. There is a part of our life that is lived on purpose; and there is a part of our life we know nothing about. There is a straight line; and suddenly it sweeps off into curvings. "No man liveth unto himself" in a far deeper sense than is usually attached to that passage. The boy was not living unto himself. He was doing a poor kind of thing; without poetry or perspective in it, yet he was the telegraph between two hearts. My brethren, this ought to invest life with something very solemn.

Here we have the *espousal of a noble policy*. What was the policy of Jonathan? He espoused the cause of right against might. David had no resources. Saul had every thing; and Jonathan said, "I know that he is the king, that he is my father; and that he has life and death upon his lips, so far as this existence is concerned, but in the name of the eternal right I defy him!" It is out of this *noble policy* that Oddfellowship has sprung. To quote from your manual, "True the name is a singular one; but we chose it, not. It came to us, attached to an institution which, for many years, in another country, had fulfilled its great motto, 'Friendship, love and truth,' by visiting the sick, relieving the distressed and burying the dead." Hence, singular as that name is—yea odious as it may sound to some—it has been rendered dear to our hearts by the glorious deeds of benevolence and philanthropy performed under it, and by the great moral and religious principle associated with it, until its singularity is lost in its moral value and beauty. To us, *Odd-Fellow* is an honorable name. We love to wear it, and to bear its reproach we deem an honor. To be an Odd-Fellow, in the sense it has in our mind, you must act and speak like an honest man; you must do all the good to mankind that is in your power; you must reverence God; do to your neighbor as you would have him do unto you, and keep yourself free from all excess and pollution.

Shall the example of David and Jonathan be lost upon us? Is there no weak cause you can espouse? Will you do nothing to put

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

down the evil side of that foolish proverb, "Nothing succeeds like success." Beard success in its own den; fight the most popular evils; espouse the poorest and the weakest causes, if you believe that they are inspired by one element of right. It takes a strong man to stand alone. It is only a man here and there that can raise a tune; almost everybody tries to have a mumble after it is raised. But stand alone, young friend; stand alone, poor man; stand with the right. Do not stand with it presumptuously and self-displaying, with self-idolatrous demonstrativeness; but stand beside it, because it is right, with all meekness and self-control and purity and honesty. We are in the minority; but we are in the minority of God. You know that I do not believe in majorities, properly so called. I believe that men should be weighed as well as numbered. I would rather have the support of one man of a certain kind than the support of ten thousand men of a kind directly opposite. If I could not have them both, I say, "give me that one man. If God be for us, who can be against us?" At one time Jonathan was up and David was down. Now David is up and Jonathan's family is down. And David remembers the old covenant, which Jonathan "caused him to swear again, because he loved him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul." As you have often heard of two soldiers before going into battle making a covenant that if one is shot the survivor will take charge of the body, the watch, the mementoes, and perhaps of the bereft family of the one that dies, so David and Jonathan had made a covenant, and now that Jonathan is dead, David is inquiring about his family, that he may show kindness unto them for their father Jonathan's sake. "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" There are many topics which the text suggests.

I. *It supplies us with an illustration of the nature and power of true friendship.*—No one can read the First Book of Samuel without being struck with the pure and faithful love which David and Jonathan bore to each other. Commencing on Jonathan's part with admiration of David's bravery and prowess, there were doubtless points of resemblance between them, in temperament, intelligence and character, and, when once brought together, their souls were "knit to each other" as the soul of one man. Both were generous and upright men, brave and courageous. Their friendship was formed in youth, when, if ever, the heart is tender

and guileless, and for purposes of mutual benefit, counsel, and sympathy. Two kindly hearts swore fealty to each other, and their loyal affection survived all the varieties and reverses of fortune. In the battle, it is not the blade of Jewelled bit, but of truest temper, that is proof against the blows which fall with lightning force. And in the day of adversity it is only the true heart that remains firm. The sternest of all tests were applied to Jonathan's love, but it was neither transmuted by the fire nor broken by the sword. It was "wonderfull, passing the love of woman." Thus sang David when lamenting the death of his friend "the beauty of Israel," in another the noblest and most pathetic ever uttered by genius consecrated by a pious and beautiful friendship. Foremost among the influences which tend to form our character, and which make the hues in which our after years are coloured, are the friendships that we make in early life. A false step then may lead us in the downward path forever, and a wrong association throw a shadow on our life which may deepen and darken till it rest upon our grave.

It is impossible to say how much David was indebted to the brave, gentle, and self-sacrificing Jonathan. Amid the tumult and strife, the treachery and tribulation, the perpetual waving of the red hand of war, events that went on careering amid blood and dust, and the thousand influences which pervade the camp and the court, and which tend to harden or to enervate the heart of man, the memory of Jonathan must have been to him a saving presence, an inspiring motive to work out for himself a true and noble character by grand and heroic deeds, in the midst of so much that was hollow and false in the daily life of the men that surrounded him. Most men have had their Jonathan. We can all point to some among the living or the dead whose wisdom, sympathy, and love responded to the yearning of our heart in some critical juncture of life; whose daily acts, or measured words, or broken hints, were to us as a new revelation, a motive or an impulse; whose influence is present with us still, and will survive the last analysis of life.

II. *It suggests the sacredness of a promise.*—When David's life was in imminent peril from the deadly hatred of Saul, Jonathan interposed and determined to achieve his deliverance. The risk was great; but he had justice on his side. His love dared all—his father's displeasure, his own reputation, the ruin of his house—to do what was right for his friend. They made a covenant—swore by their own great love—on Jonathan's part

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that he would save David's life, and on David's part that he would show kindness to Jonathan and his house forever. Here we have a *disproof of a familiar proverb*. The familiar proverb is, "Blood is thicker than water." Jonathan says, "Right is thicker than blood. David is no relation of mine physically; but David is an injured man, and my father is the individual who is injuring him, and I snap all ties that I may go and stand by the side of God and proclaim myself in favor of the right!" Consider no ties where righteousness is in question. There are secondary rights, and there are primary rights. You are your father's child, and you say you ought to be filial and obedient. The spirit of righteousness says, "No!" "Children obey your parents—in the Lord. That is the explanatory qualification. Whatever your father tells you to do; if it be not "in the Lord," you have a right to resist it. Whatever your government tells you to do that is not "in the Lord," you have a right to protest against, and to resist to the utmost. I fear we are serving some sub-gods, some under-deities, some little proxy kings, and forgetting the One Eternal, Absolute Ruler. We are measuring ourselves by false standards and not by the one great judgement. Will you do wrong for your father's sake, and call it filial obedience? There is only One Father. The term "father" that we use, we use only temporarily and with qualifications. One is your father—God! Let every tie be broken, let it go so that you serve Him who is clothed with righteousness, and who sits for ever in the light! Shall a man say, "If it had been anybody but my father, I certainly would have taken another course." I ask you what is the question in controversy? If it be a question of mere politeness, civility, honor due to age, attention required by the ordinary courtesies of life; then I honor you for honoring your father. But if it be a moral question, a question as between right and wrong, your father ceases to have any claim upon your conscience if so be, to indicate a course that is foul or questionable. The question is not between "Blood and water, the question is between blood and God, blood and righteousness, physical kinship and eternal alliance with the virtues and honesties of the universe. Are any of you at this moment detained from doing right because your father is on the other side? Tell me. Kept in a wrong church, where the truth is not spoken, because your father has a pew there? Kept from the open profession of Christianity, because your father would feel annoyed if you said

anything about it! Are you comforting yourself with this text from the fool's bible, "Blood is thicker than water." Then, if you have given me a momentary advantage over you in electing me as your afternoon teacher for this one occasion, let me use what you yourselves have put into my hands for the purpose of saying, give up your father, rather than give up conscience, righteousness, truth, purity. Do not make his shame public, if you can avoid it, but let everything be struck down, rather than the spirit of righteousness shall be grieved or quenched. "(Grieve not the Spirit, quench not the Spirit." Inasmuch as you have had bitter experience of this kind of conduct from your father, see to it, that, in your turn, you give your children the benefit of a right example.

Jonathan kept his promise and died in the faith. From the time of his death there is a lapse of sixteen years before David proposes this inquiry. Why this delay? Reasons of state, the prevalence of war, political disquietude, the danger which menaced his throne, and the multiplied engagements of his restless life are urged as an excuse. Let them be admitted to have their weight. But the duty of the man can never be merged in the duty of the statesman. The obligations of a private citizen are as strong upon the conscience as being a private citizen, a blessing is pronounced upon him that "swearth to his own hurt and changeth not." This Benison, however, can have no application to the man who rashly and wickedly covenants with another, to compass an end which in itself is wrong, or which, if right, is to be compassed only by illegal or immoral means. Such a compact is, in law, a misdemeanor, and in morals, a crime. It cannot, therefore, be binding upon any man's conscience. That which we have no right to promise we can have no right to fulfil, but virtuous vows are binding for ever, and "in keeping of them there is great reward."

III. *It supposes on the side of David a grateful and benevolent heart.*—He sought information, for he wished to do a kindness. Had he been a selfish man, or ungrateful, the old friendship would have been forgotten and the promise broken. Is there yet any of the house of Saul? Yet Saul had been his enemy; had sought his life; had persecuted him with relentless fury, till his soul was like a "partridge on the mountains". This hatred of Saul he might have set off against the love of Jonathan, found the balance equal and cried quits with the whole family. No one would have blamed him had he left the

house of Saul to perish. But his own heart condemned him, and history would have fixed a brand upon his memory. Two and twenty years of a chequered life had not blotted out the recollection of Jonathan's self sacrificing love, and the plea, "for Jonathan's sake" had power with him still. Gratitude is often the spring of generous deeds. Show kindness to one and you make him by the act feel kindly to others. The hard and cruel selfishness of rich men adds gall to the bitterness of poverty. The frozen heart that does not thaw at sight of human misery will send an icy chill into the heart of the miserable; and God knows they do not need that! There is one to whom we all owe an infinite debt of gratitude and love. Face to face with death and the curse of sin, He sacrificed his life to save ours. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. A Scotch preacher had the following circumstances come under his observation: "There was a poor woman in the parish, who was about to be turned out because she could not pay her rent. One night she heard a loud knocking at the door, and she made no answer, and continued to hide herself. She was frightened almost unto death. She said: "That's the officer of the law come to throw me out of my home." A few days after a Christian philanthropist met her in the street, and said: "My poor woman, where were you the other night? I came round to your house to pay your rent. Why didn't you let me in, were you at home?" "Why" she replied, "was that you?" "Yes that was me; I came to pay your rent." "Why," she said, "if I had had any idea it was you I would have let you in. I thought it was an officer come to cast me out of my home." Oh! soul; that loud knocking at thy gate to-day is not the Sheriff come to put you in jail; it is the best friend you ever had come to go your security. You shiver with terror because you think it is wrath. It is mercy. Realize this wonderful love of Christ, and you will find self-denial and self-surrender a possible thing, and but the natural return of love for love. He who is born of God and constrained by the love of Christ is conscious of an instant enlargement of sympathy. The heart that has room for Christ has room for all whom Christ loves, and its instinctive yearning cry is—"Are there any to whom I can show kindness for Jesus' sake?"

IV. *The question is answered.*—"And there was of the house of Saul a servant

whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the King said unto him, art thou Ziba? And he said, thy servant is he. And the King said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the King, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet. And the King said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the King, Behold he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammie, in Lodabar." What an illustration have we here of the proverb—"Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Fathers, whose only entail is guilt and a curse must not be surprised if reverses come upon their families, and their children live to execrate their memory. The retributions of Providence are stern and exacting. That which is called in Scripture "the bloody house of Saul" was brought to ruin. A fragment remains, a mutilated fragment, like a shattered column of a stately palace, once the pride and glory of the land. A lame youth is discovered, the last and only member of the house of Saul in any sense worthy of this kindness of David. But the fact that *one* was found is instructive. Every honest inquiry, like that of the text, is sure to meet with a ready response. Earnest, willing workers are not cashiered by the Great Master for want of work. The sum of human misery is always equal to the sum of human sympathy. There is no superfluity of virtue in the Church or in the world. Charity need never run to waste for want of an object on which to exercise its power. He who seeks will find abundant opportunities of doing good. David no sooner put the question than a lame youth was discovered who needed and deserved his uttermost kindness. As a rule those objects of sympathy which are only to be found when sought are worthier than those which obtrusively thrust themselves in your way. "The poor ye have always with you." "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

V. *Action is taken.*—"Then King David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammie, in Lodabar. Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth! And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him, Fear not; for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."

Here is first an act of self-denying justice. David promptly and vigorously set aside the law of confiscation, a law which is seldom righteous, because it frequently falls with weightier force upon the innocent than upon the guilty. In law, the patrimony of the house of Saul had passed to David on his accession to the throne. This legal right he gave up for the benefit of Jonathan's son, saying, "I will give thee all the land of Saul thy father."

This is followed by an act of genuine kindness. "Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually,"—thus conferring a signal honour, an eminent distinction; and exalting to the King's right hand one who, though he had been "to the manor born," was now accounted by the nation as an outcast, and by himself as a "dead dog." But this honorary kindness would have been an idle mockery without the previous act of substantial justice. Observe the new and practical exposition of the proverb which commends us to "be just before we are generous," a proverb which we often employ as an apology for selfishness, and as though there were none to whom we owe justice excepting ourselves. "To do justly and to love mercy" is a law which not only prescribes the noblest of human virtues, but the order in which they ought to stand. Who can tell how much of the weight of distress now pressing upon certain classes of the community would be removed simply by an efficacious recovery of and return to public and private rectitude! Christianity has done a noble work in the world as a system of sympathy; but it has yet a grander work to accomplish as a rule of right. Justice is a sacred principle which goes before kindness, and is higher than all the forms of law. Mercy is never out of season; but the impulse of charity and the motives of benevolence can never take precedence of the principles of justice. There are social problems, grave and solemn questions of class well-being, engaging the attention of thoughtful men, and they are too difficult and weighty to be disposed of by the delicate logic of pity. The malady is of a sort which will not yield to emollients. The lotion of sympathy frets the patient as much as it soothes his anguish, if in his conscience he feels that charity is given him as a substitute for justice. There is a morbid curiosity to gauge the amount of misery without taking action to alleviate or remove it. To a greater extent than in any preceding age we have had "commissions of inquiry." What has been or what is to be the practical issue of all this? "Oh!" there is too much abstract,

willing, purposing in this poor world. We talk by aggregates, and think by systems, and being used to face our evils in statistics, are inclined to cure them with unreal remedies." It behoves us to ask whether our individual doings with the world are commensurate with our desire for information; to be prompt and energetic in our action, just and generous in all our dealings, and still to ask if there be any yet of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake."

VI. An incidental phrase or fact grows into the largeness of a principle to the thoughtful mind. The phrase "for Jonathan's sake" suggests some remarks on the law of mediative influence and the posthumous power of the good. This doctrine of mediative influence has a Divine as well as a human side.—Do we not read that when the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah had waxed great in the sight of heaven, calling vengeance upon their grievous and abounding sin, that, had there been ten righteous within their walls, the cities of the plain would have been saved from the fiery retribution that was rained down upon them! Again, when in later days the Jews had filled up the measure of their iniquity, the thunderbolt was held back for a time while the voice of the Lord cried, "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it." (Jer. v. 1.) What a view this gives one of the mediative power of goodness! How it stirs the heart to feel that ten righteous would have saved Sodom, and that one would have saved Jerusalem; that "for their sake" God would have suspended judgment, and counted the goodness of the few as of more weight than the wickedness of the many. Good men are the salt of the earth, the conservators of life; their character is at once a protest and an intercession; a protest against the wrongdoing of the world; an intercession with God who governs the world. See, too, how this law receives in an infinitely higher sense, its perfect exemplification in the character and work of Jesus Christ, "the one mediator between God and men." He who alone of all the men who have trodden this globe faced the evil of the world with a stainless soul, stands midway between God and man, having in his mortal flesh received the stripes we deserved. It is not difficult to understand how that "by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," or how

that "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We pray for pardon, peace, salvation; and the argument with which we seal our prayer—"for Christ's sake"—is felt to be conclusive. That plea prevails. God "looks at the man on his right hand," and "for his sake," restores to us all our forfeited inheritance and makes us sit down with Him in heavenly places. All that we lost by our father Adam we regain through Jesus, even as Mephibosheth regained, through Jonathan, all that he had lost by his father Saul.

But this law has a *simply human side*. A woman whose face was lined with anguish and sin stood at the bar, convicted of felony, and put to, as a plea for mitigation of punishment, the fact that her three sons had, but a little while before, been slain while fighting for their country, two in the Crimea and one in India. The law has no conscience for such a plea, but the human heart of the judge could appreciate its force, and he showed kindness to the miserable woman "for the sake" of her slaughtered children. The relations of life are far-reaching. Sympathy often finds an explanation in the unconscious influence of subtle and remotely connected facts. Attempt to analyse the motives which lead to any act of kindness or charity. In one case it may spring from *benevolence* of feeling. For there are some whose system of nerves is so active, and so harmoniously attend to the wants of humanity, that every sorrow they behold reverberates the more keenly on their own organization, so that instinctively they hasten to alleviate the pain, the sight of which causes them anguish. Or it may result from the awakening of *associated feelings*. I can imagine a widow in her lonely home, rocking herself to and fro, as she listens to the raging of the billows and the mournful gusts of the storm, dreaming a wakeful dream of her only son at sea. A sailor comes to her door to ask for alms. Seven words tell his sad story—"a fatherless boy and a shipwrecked mariner." There he stands, recalling by every word and look the image of her own child. Who can imagine his being repulsed in such an hour of wonder, danger, and love? Nay, for though her heart by nature was selfish and hard, the thought of her Jonathan at sea would soften it with pity, and she would show kindness to the stranger for Jonathan's sake.

Or it may result from the *action of religious principle*. No better proof of the power of religion can be given than that it substitutes benevolence for selfishness, and compels, by the inner life, the greedy hand

which hitherto grasped its own to open to the cry of distress. This conquest over nature it achieves. There are thousands who deny themselves daily, in order to show kindness to the weak, the poor, the afflicted. Their life is a life of active charity. Their giving and doing are not impulsive and wayward, but sustained—systematic. The secret of their kindness is not to be found in any peculiar tenderness of nature, or in any deep rooted sentiment of pity. They are strangers to the poetry of sympathy. They are plain, prosaic men, but business-doing philanthropists; plodding, earnest workers; going about doing good, in a grand, unconscious way, never thinking of reward or thanks, but silently obeying the workings of an inward power. What is that secret power, but the love of Christ which, seizing the heart, has revolutionised their whole being, so that, "for the sake of Christ," who "though He was rich, for their sakes He became poor," they will dare and endure what no other force could induce them to do and to suffer?

David's was a *posthumous gratitude*, and it reminds one of the *undying power of good men*. That which belongs to the soul can never die. Love, truth, goodness, courage—no grave can hold them. The savor of a holy life lives after death. The body, when death is upon it, makes haste to see corruption. Worms destroy it. It moulders into dust. The world is full of graves and sepulchres, of mortal struggles, of bitter partings, of last looks and accents, of death-bed counsels and stifled farewells, as though it were now a dying chamber and now a place of burial. You dig into the caverned tombs of a by-gone age; the bones of animals and the shells of fish are there; but not a trace of the human beings who once peopled the globe. The history of the lower animals is written on the rocks. The sandstone, the alabaster, and the chalk tell us of their structure and their habits. But it is not so with man. Man's history is written in the clay of his life—not in the marble tomb, in deeds of heroism, self-denial, and beneficence, which serve, to all who come after, as an impulse and a motive; or in the ceaseless working of his brain, putting down the false and the wrong, or building up the true and the right, which shall endure through all generations. The best and greatest men have often been least appreciated during their life, but most honored after their death. We build the sepulchres of our fathers. The child takes a melancholy pleasure in erecting a graceful tablet to the memory of a much-loved parent. In reports of char-

itable institutions you often meet with contributions "in memory of" those whom death has taken away. All this is posthumous gratitude; a proof that the love and goodness of the dead survive their death; even as the love and goodness of Jonathan lived in David's heart long after his bones and his flesh had mouldered in the tomb!

"Friend after friend departs,
Who hath not lost a friend."

We cannot write our "In Memoriam" in beautiful verse which poets will admire, but we may write it in noble and beautiful works—a life poem which all will read and love. Think of the debt that you owe to the living and the dead; of the vital affinities which bind all classes of men together; and of the wonderful love of Him who "came to seek and to save the lost;" and fail not to ask—Is there any of the great family of man, to whom I may show kindness for Jesus' sake? You will have a response—a yearning, piteous cry for help and hope, for sympathy, light and love, from some who are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, in the lowest depths of moral and physical degradation.

One objection to Odd-fellowship, and, in fact, to all society charities is, that they are partial, and sectional; having respect to one class only. My brethren, we require this organized, and systematic benevolence, we do not see that Mr. Sumner committed any grave offence, when he turned away empty a hand that sought aid, with his great words that he was "living for the welfare of a race which none else would help;" for it was just this concentration of soul upon one great mission that not only so powerfully affected the destiny of the negro race, but which reacted so powerfully, also, upon the character of the benefactor. All benevolence, that it should be judiciously applied, must be based upon information as to the object, and, that it may bring happiness to the giver, must be based on his love of the object. A gift bestowed without any information about the cause, must only have brought annoyance to the soul that gave. I do not know what better men can do when a thousand different persons come wishing a dollar each for unknown or, at least, uncare for objects, than to say: "No." I have studied the wants of India or of the sewing girls, and I would rather pour my thousand dollars along that channel of my own information and feeling, than to scatter my property and love out upon the four winds." One reason all charities so annoy each citizen may be found in the fact that he gives at the dictation or

upon the authority of some one. Instead of by the light and in the love of his own bosom. Each man's heart spreads over so many objects that its love nowhere is deep. Some one said to an Englishman of American education, that it was "very broad," and called forth the fear from the Englishman "that such a broad stream might be shallow." Perhaps each one's charity, by spreading over so wide a field, becomes so shallow in thought, and also weak in its influence upon the benefactor.

Some object to the secrecy of our noble order. But we could not maintain our principles inviolable without this. The history of the world's charity, written from the days when the Roman and Greek friends and families were wont to enter into a solemn compact to stand by each other, and by each other's children, should dark days come, the history of this love, from the story of the poor Samaritan to the marble asylums hidden among the hills of old Rome,—this story of God's love, shadowing itself in the human spirit, all the way from the first century of human life on the Globe to this nineteenth century of our Lord all show the need and importance of this secrecy. But again, many will complain that this Society, and those of a kindred nature, have not always worn and maintained these noble features. The reply must always be that all ideals keep far ahead of the facts. Facts are slow, defective things, as well as stubborn things. Painters, and Sculptors, and poets outline the true woman or man, but the real fact always lags far behind. There has been no Beatrice, no Evangline, no John Halifax, no St. Louis, no Washington. There have been beautiful approaches to each of these forms of body and soul; and when the mind sees these beautiful approaches it jumps over the intervening space and leaves the actual for the ideal. All human institutions are like these personal ideas, better in theory than in fact. The Church of Christ, or Odd-Fellowship, or any other institution, in marching through such a world as ours, must share in the general imperfection. Their facts must lag behind their theories, just as the real Washington or the real Beatrice moves far behind the one of the poet, or painter, or historian. A stream, leaving its rocky springs, however clear, becomes colored by the lands through which it must pass. Flowing through the woods, its issues stained by decaying leaves; flowing through earthen fields, where it has no rocky banks or bed, it becomes a yellow Missouri, to carry its stain for thousands of

miles. Government and literature, and language, and art, and hence our Society also, are deeply colored by their long flow amid the fields of human infirmity.

It is time to dismiss our theme for this afternoon. From the text and from all human history read the lesson that charity is one of the fundamental laws of life. It is made a perpetual law by the perpetual sorrows of earth, sorrow of sin, sorrow of ignorance, sorrow of poverty. And it is made a perpetual law by its reflection upon the mind that lives its life. No one can be called educated if in his bosom there does not flow, or has not flowed, this wonderful sentiment. That virtue which gave Christ His halo of light, and which now enthrones Him in the world's love and worship, is a virtue of which no human heart can empty itself, without leaving the soul only an empty urn where flowers might have been. The wonderful deeds charity has done for the multitude do not surpass the marvellous transformation it has always made in those who have done the deeds. Wilberforce not only delivered slaves from bondage, but, in the same ins-

tant, himself from all littleness. While the slaves rose up in a song of liberty, his spirit rose up in a divine grandeur. Grace Darling not only dragged the drowning out upon the sandy shore, but her girlish arms, in the same instant, dragged her own heart out upon the shores of immortality; not the immortality of fame, but of her own intrinsic worth. Thus Christ, when He lived and died for men, not only raised the lost world up to blessedness, but lifted himself up also to a blessedness above and beyond that of humanity. In view, therefore, of the inequality of human condition, you will not dare slight this great equalizer of religion, and education, and happiness. They that have must share with those who have not.—this is a vast law that enters earth's darkness and makes it radiant in the light. And you will not dare rob yourself of the divine character which a charitable life will bring. Educated out of this atmosphere, man is only a brute.

"In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's concern is Charity."



